REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The Office Action mailed December 16, 2004 has been reviewed and carefully considered. Claims 66-68 have been added. Claims 1-68 are pending in this application, with claims 1, 14, 27, 32, 40, 48, 51, 66, 67, and 68 being the only independent claims. Reconsideration of the above-identified application, as herein amended and in view of the following remarks, is respectfully requested.

In the Office Action mailed December 16, 2004, claims 27-28, 30-31, and claims 48-49 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,704,283 (Stiller) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,711,411 (Ruffini).

Claims 1-26, 32-47, and 51-65 are allowed.

Claims 29 and 50 were found to contain allowable subject matter and would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Regarding the rejection of independent claims 27 and 48, each of these claims recites "if more than one path having least hops-to-host count exists, selecting from among them a path with least load for routing messages from the node to the at least one control node of the wireless RF network". Neither Stiller, Ruffini, nor the combined teachings thereof disclose, teach or suggest that recitation.

Stiller relates to a method for traffic routing in a small wireless data networks, and more specifically provides a technique for the assignment and use of addresses (col. lines 11-15 of Stiller). The technique allows concise network configuration data to be appended to a message which avoids the need for complex routing protocols (col. 2, lines 21-27). The configuration data may include the number of transmission hops required to reach another node (col. 2, lines 31-38). Furthermore, selection of a route may be determined by selecting a route

with a minimum number of transmission hops (col. 2, lines 57-65). However, Stiller fails to disclose teach or suggest selecting a path of least load if more than one path having the least hops exist.

The Examiner alleges that col. 2, lines 57-65 of Stiller discloses selecting a path of least load if more than on path having least hops exists. However, this section discloses only "selecting a route with a minimum number of transmission hops". The paragraph also discloses selecting a route word and destination word but fails to describe anything related to determining a load. Therefore, Stiller can not be considered to teach or suggest selecting a path of least load if more than one path having least hops exists, as recited in independent claims 27 and 48.

Ruffini fails to teach or suggest what Stiller lacks. Ruffini relates to synchronization in telecommunication systems and discloses a synchronization network including a plurality of nodes and logic that distributes reference clocks to each of the nodes (col. 4, lines 22-26 of Ruffini). Each of the nodes stores a table representing a most recent status of the synchronization network (col. 4, lines 26-29). When changes occur at a node, the table is updated and the status is distributed according to a synchronization network management protocol (see col. 4, lines 29-47). Since Ruffini relates to a synchronization network in which all nodes are updated with relative timing information, Ruffini fails to teach or suggest anything related to selecting a path of least load if more than one path having least hops exists.

The Examiner alleges that col. 14, lines 5-17 of Ruffini disclose sending load information and a hops-to-client count periodically. This section of Ruffini discloses only that packets related to synchronization status of nodes are sent periodically. As explained in Ruffini, the synchronization status relates to timing of various network elements relative to a primary reference clock and does not have anything to do with routing information such as hops-to-host

or loading of nodes. Accordingly, neither Stiller nor Ruffini teach or suggest the limitation "if more than one path having least hops-to-host count exists, selecting from among them a path with least load for routing messages from the node to the at least one control node of the wireless RF network", as expressly recited in independent claims 27 and 48.

In view of the above remarks, it is respectfully submitted that independent claims 27 and 48 are allowable over Stiller in view of Ruffini.

New independent claims 66, 67, 68 are drawn to a node in a wireless RF network including a processor with a program implementation for executing the steps of independent method claims 1, 14, and 27. It is respectfully submitted that new independent claims 66, 67, and 68 are allowable for at least the same reasons as are independent claims 1, 14, and 27.

A check including the amount $750.00 is enclosed in payment for the addition of three new independent claims in excess of three and three new claims in excess of 20.

It is believed that no fees or charges are required at this time in connection with the present application. However, if any fees or charges are required at this time, they may be charged to our Patent and Trademark Office Deposit Account No. 03-2412.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: May 16, 2005